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CLOSING THE GAP IN INDIAN EDUCATION.

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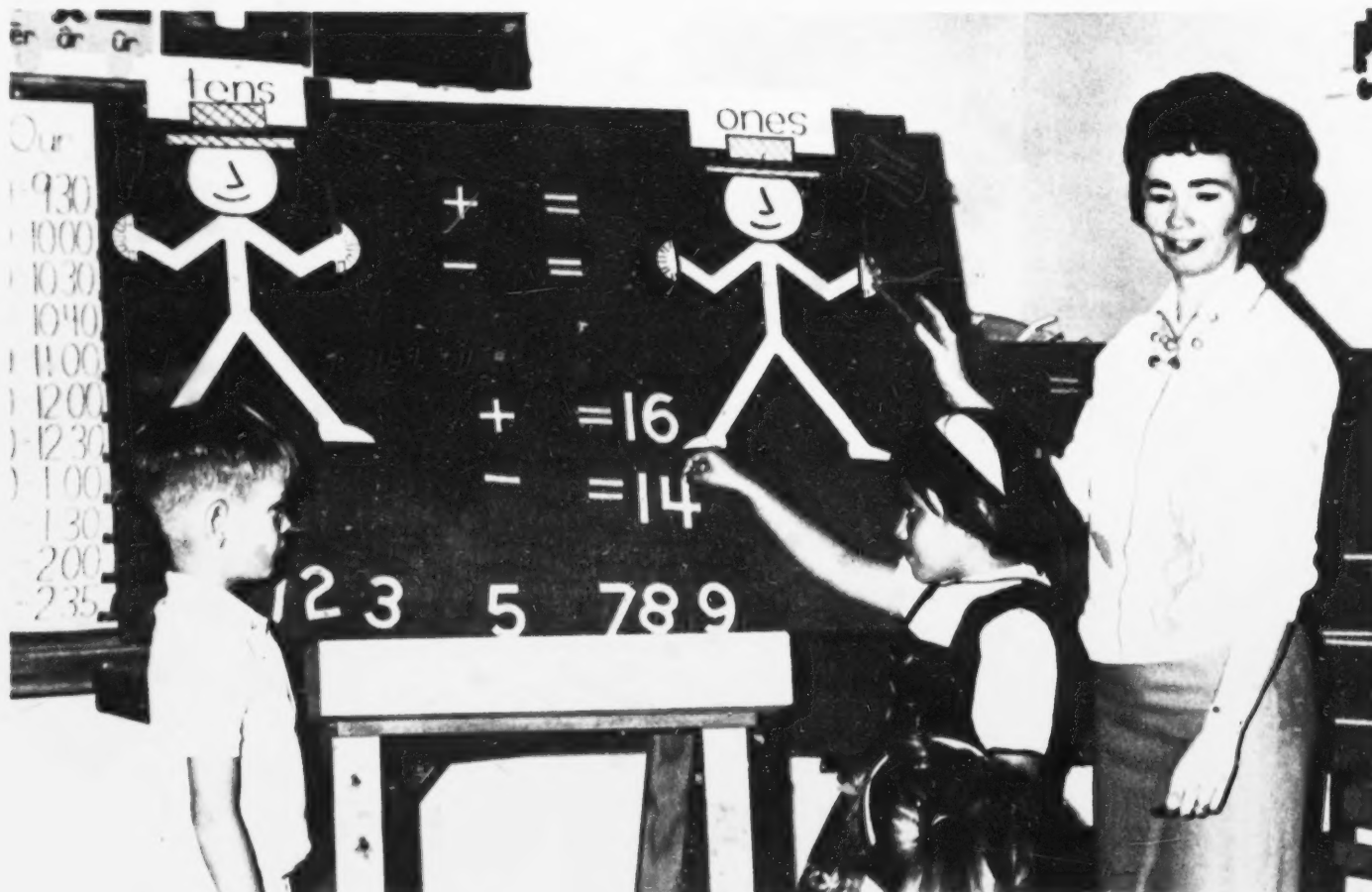
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THIS DOCUMENT WAS PREPARED AS A REPORT TO THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMISSION ON RURAL POVERTY. A DESCRIPTION OF INDIAN EDUCATION FOR THE YEAR 1965 IS INCLUDED WITH STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF SUCH FACTORS AS POPULATION AND THE USE OF FEDERAL FUNDING IN THE STATE OF ARIZONA. THE NATURE OF THE ARIZONA INDIAN EDUCATION PROBLEM IS DEFINED AND IS SEEN IN THE CONTEXT OF CULTURAL FACTORS IN SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT. VARIOUS ILLUSTRATIONS OF POTENTIAL CULTURAL DIFFERENCES ARE INCLUDED. TWELVE FACTORS FOR CLOSING THE EDUCATIONAL GAP OF THE INDIANS ARE PRESENTED. (JM)

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CLOSING THE GAP

IN INDIAN EDUCATION



REPORT TO THE:

NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMISSION
ON RURAL POVERTY

TUCSON, ARIZONA

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CLOSING THE GAP IN INDIAN EDUCATION

"Education is only a tool and it alone cannot solve all problems, but it can help the American Indian to be independent, walk straight, and stand tall."

Shirley Marcen
Adams State College
Alamosa, Colorado
1964

The school year 1965-66 has developed a different orientation to the formulation of guidelines for Indian education. This orientation renders former guidelines inadequate and has necessitated a new framework as a context for this year's annual report. This was made necessary when Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall promised "a new period in the history of the Bureau of Indian Affairs." His plans encompassed greater emphasis on education of Indian children. Included in the changes was the appointment of Robert Bennett, an Oneida Indian from Wisconsin, who is the first Indian to hold the office of Commissioner of Indian Affairs since 1869. Bennett is encouraging greater participation of Indian parents in school affairs.

Just how the Arizona Division of Indian Education will confront new opportunities for improved education for Indian students is yet to be evaluated. Senator Paul Fannin of Arizona recently raised the question whether Indian education might be placed in the hands of the State. He believes the federal government should pay the bill, and the state-federal program be administered through the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. The Democrat administration has maintained an open mind on this proposal. Many complications beset such a proposal. How would this help or hinder the opportunity for Arizona to assume a leadership role in establishing guidelines for new ideas in Indian education? This should be given a great amount of serious thought and advanced planning.

What will be the role of the Arizona Division of Indian Education in helping speed the day of Indian self-sufficiency in this "new period" of Indian education? Services of the Division must be tailored to stimulate and assist in this educational change which should be held back only by the limits of each district's own inventiveness and creativity and its willingness to learn from the failures and successes of past experiences.

Monies from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 were made available to schools. This program helped local school districts enrich the curriculum not only for Indian students but for all students. Each program was tailored to the specific needs of each community and designed to make optimum use of the community's educational resources. A few of the innovative ideas are listed below:

1. After-school study areas.

2. Language laboratories for special equipment and special personnel.
3. Exemplary educational radio and television programs.
4. Visiting teacher services.
5. Reading centers.
6. Guidance and counseling services.
7. School health services.
8. Experimental or exemplary preschool programs.
9. Adult education centers.
10. Mobile science laboratories.
11. Improved library services.
12. Arts and Crafts centers.
13. Special education classes.
14. Psychological services--not before possible.
15. Multipurpose youth centers.
16. Centralized teaching facilities--concentrated on teaching certain subjects.
17. Use of Indian teacher-aides.
18. Team teaching.
19. Bookmobile.
20. Better planned and longer field trips.

Indian Education in 1965

Indian children attend public, Federal, private, and mission schools. In fiscal year 1965 there were 134,064 Indian students, ages 6 to 18 years inclusive, enrolled in these schools in the United States. Compared to 132,654 students last year, enrollment increased 1.1 percent. There are approximately 33,000 Indian students enrolled in public, Federal and mission schools in Arizona. This number broken down is as follows: public 13,000; Federal 17,000; mission 3,000.

During the year 1961 the Bureau dropped from its school census of Indian school children those residing in the States of California, Idaho, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, Oregon (except the Warm Springs Agency), Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin, where responsibility for the education of their Indian children had previously been accepted by the States.

In 1965 more than half (55.1 percent) of all Indian children of school age attended public schools. Of those enrolled in school, 61.4 percent (6.3 percent over 18 and under 6) attended public schools, 32.2 percent attended Federal schools, and 6.4 percent attended mission and other schools. Comparable percentages in 1964 were 59.8, 33.3, and 6.9.

For more than three centuries Indian education in the United States was largely under the direction of missionaries. As early as 1568 the Jesuit Fathers organized a school at Havana, Cuba, for Indian children from Florida. This was the first school attended by Indian children who lived within the United States.

Many of the treaties between the United States and Indian tribes provided for the

establishment of schools for Indian children. Congress has also provided schools for Indian children where other educational facilities were not available. In 1842, there were 37 Indian schools in operation and by 1881 the number had increased to 106. In 1965 the Bureau of Indian Affairs operated 258 schools with an enrollment of 48,050 Indian children, and 19 dormitories for 4,221 children attending public schools.

Indian children are entitled to the same opportunities for public school education as are provided for other citizens living within a State. It is encouraging to note that the States have assumed responsibility for the education of 82,302 (55.1 percent) of school-age Indian children in the States where the Bureau of Indian Affairs has direct educational responsibility. Over one-third are educated at no cost to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. In some States, however, tax-exempt, Indian-owned lands and large numbers of Indian children within a school district may create financial burdens for which local funds are inadequate. As early as 1890, contracts providing for financial assistance to schools attended by Indian children were negotiated with individual districts. It was recognized then, as today, that Indian children become better adjusted to living with all people in a community when they associate with other children in public schools. The Johnson-O'Malley Act, which became law in 1934, authorized the Secretary of the Interior to enter into contracts with States for the education of Indians and to permit the use of Federal school buildings and equipment by local school authorities. Consequently, some States with large Indian populations now have no Federal schools within their boundaries.

Under the terms of Public Law 874, 81st Cong. (64 Stat. 1100), as amended August 13, 1958, administered by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, a new Federal aid resource was made available to eligible school districts educating Indian children. This aid is available to meet partial costs of normal school operation. Additional supplemental aid for the education of Indian children under the Johnson-O'Malley program is limited to districts that do not qualify under the Public Law 874 program and to districts meeting educational problems under extraordinary circumstances, including special services and special programs designed to facilitate the education of Indian children.

In fiscal year 1965, the Bureau of Indian Affairs entered into contracts with 14 States and with school districts in three other States, in accordance with approved plans which specify conditions under which financial aid is extended. In addition to these, aid was provided through contracts for the education in public schools of 2,379 out-of-district Indian children living in dormitories operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 7 towns adjacent to the Navajo Reservation, and in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Congressional appropriations to the Bureau of Indian Affairs are limited to the education of children of one-fourth or more degree of Indian blood and native children in Alaska, except for the Cherokee Agency where children of less than one-quarter degree of Indian blood enrolled in the tribe may attend Federal schools. In Alaska this includes Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut. One-hundred specific tribes or tribal groups and Aleuts, Eskimos, and various tribes of Indians in Alaska were represented in the 1965 school census.

Nature of Educational Problem

It is recognized by the educators of Arizona that the Indian people of the state are in a transitional stage. They are torn between their own ancient standards and those which are urged upon them by the non-Indians they contact. An appreciable number of Indian children become confused by the conflicting precepts of their elders and their non-Indian models so that they tend, in effect, to reject the whole problem of acculturation as meaningless, or insoluble. The majority of Arizona Indians no longer feel completely at home or at ease in their native world of values and are still unable to accept without reservations the values and ethics of white society.

The teacher who looks, perhaps unconsciously, with scorn upon Indian values and attempts to implant his own notions of success, who makes the student dissatisfied with every element of his Indian life without offering a way out that is possible of achievement, builds a gulf between the student and his people, and leaves him in some no-man's land, neither Indian nor non-Indian.

A growing number of Indian leaders and educators view separate systems of education as reducing rather than enhancing an Indian child's opportunity to become a part of American society on equal terms with his neighbor. In light of this changing viewpoint, it is pertinent to ask how the public schools can meet this challenge and help provide the background for successful assimilation.

In the United States public education has long been an important agent in the cultural assimilation of immigrant groups in American life. Today, it has a similarly important function for the oldest American group of all--the American Indian. Arizona Indians are slowly increasing in number. Sixty percent of Arizona Indian children come from homes where no English is spoken. Their lives are a curious mixture of old and new: of riding on half-wild shaggy ponies and big yellow busses; of tribal feasts and Coco-Cola; of Corn Dances and Mother's Day. What can be done by teachers to prevent Indian children from being overwhelmed in a public school environment?

Many factors must determine the program stressed in public schools where Indian children are enrolled. These factors reside within the pupils themselves, the parents, the teachers, the schoolrooms, and the community. The elements within each of these supposedly disparate entities should together influence the formulation and implementation of the instructional program in the schools of the state. There are two fundamental objectives that, in practice, are so interrelated that it is difficult to say which should be given precedence when in a written statement. The first is the development of the ability to communicate in the language; this at first glance would seem the most important to the classroom teacher. The second is the fostering of an insight into the cultural patterns and social values of the country whose language is being studied. The findings of research tend to prove that cultural factors can actually control the learning process more than individual ability. It has been said that it is much easier to lose a linguistic accent than a cultural one.

Acculturation is many times accompanied by emotional instability because of children's natural love for their family. It can be retarded by the family's loyalty to

tribal traditions and fear of the new way of life. The school plays a major role in the acculturation of Indian-speaking children. As the school teaches a new language, it also must teach new behaviors to take the place of the ones learned in the child's own culture.

English is learned most readily when English is spoken, not in segregated schools. Children must feel secure in the practice of the new skill by much encouragement of its use. Need must be felt for the new language--to express an idea. To thank a friend for a favor, to ask for one's turn to take a ball out to the playground, are real and vital situations to the young child and call for use of English.

Forbidding the use of the native language is not only ineffective, but may create resistance and an emotional block which could cause retardation in the rate of learning the new language. The wise teacher, then, will create situations which will require the use of oral English instead of hushing the child who speaks in his native tongue. Through active participation in the democratic environment, that all schools should provide, the Indian child will be helped not only to learn to speak English but to adjust to the way of life that is every American's heritage.

The cultural isolation of Arizona Indians cannot be broken down easily. Many factors cause this isolation. To name a few, a low economic status, location of reservations, bad roads, tribal customs, rejection by the majority group, segregated housing and schooling. The school cannot deal directly with many of these problems; they are beyond the scope of its authority. By helping children and adults to recognize and assume the responsibilities and privileges as citizens in a democratic society, and the skills in using the techniques of democracy, the school will fulfill its role in the acculturation of Arizona Indians.

Teachers must understand the traditions of the Indian group with whom they are working, always bearing in mind that all Indians do not have the same cultural background, and that traditions vary from tribe to tribe. The schools of Arizona have to educate, therefore, not Indians of common background, but sheep-raising Navajo, who must learn to utilize and conserve their ranges for an unlimited future; village-dwelling Hopi, whose culture is better adapted to simple mesa and desert living than anything white man has yet devised, but who need to understand the dominant culture's technical and health advancements which can be adapted to their present society; Apache, whose now suppressed semi-nomadic and raiding habits have left their lives empty of the old satisfactions, and who must change from the hunting of wild animals to the raising of domesticated animals; Papago, who must adjust a rapidly increasing population and cattle industry to restricted and eroded lands by new methods of irrigation and cultivation; Pima, once subsistence farmers who are now faced with great commercial farming opportunities and an efficient and technically advanced irrigation system; Colorado River tribes, who practiced originally very little, if any, agriculture, and were the least advanced in cultural development of Arizona Indians, and suffered more from encroachment of white civilization, and yet are now living in a semidependence on this civilization.

Each of these groups has its own system of social relationship and social controls, by which it maintains its group as well as carries on its economic system. Each has met

non-Indian culture in its own way, improving its life with what it has selected from this culture or finding social and personal disorganization as the result of economic change.

Social structures within each tribe should be understood by Arizona educators. Do not have the idea that all Indians love each other, or that they all are thought as equals by their tribal brothers. The Indian-speaking child in your classroom may not have heard English spoken until he enters school or he may only speak his native language, as a show of respect, with his grandparents. His home may be a hogan, a wickiup, or a well-furnished modern house. He may eat fried bread, a widely advertised cereal for his breakfast, or come to school without breakfast. He may go with his parents when they migrate to the vegetable fields or he may live all his life in one neighborhood. He may go with his mother to a supermarket, in the newest model pickup or car, or he may travel slowly to the nearest trading post, by a wagon drawn by two underfed horses.

The Indian child of Arizona may listen to fables and tribal stories told by his grandparents, or he may listen to stories read from carefully selected books by his college educated parents. He may listen to off-colored stories told around the campfire in a migratory farm labor camp. The social and economic backgrounds of Indian children differ as much as those of children that are born and reared in the homes of other American children. This should always be kept in mind by teachers when planning their curriculum. Boys and girls with these differences in life problems, different environments and societies, cannot enter into a single curriculum equally, nor derive equal benefit from it.

Arizona Indians

Arizona has a larger number of full-blooded Indians than does any other state. In 1960 the Indian population of Arizona was estimated to be near 100,000. This is one-fifth of all the Indians in the nation. The remarkable element in the history of Arizona Indians has been their long spatial and social isolation which has led to a slow-changing cultural pattern in most tribes. Indians of Arizona continue to speak their own language and hold to old social and religious customs.

The major contributing factor to the upsurge in Indian interest in education, and the breakdown of this isolation, was World War II. This event took many of the Indians away from their reservations to serve in the armed forces, or to work in industrial areas. After observing the advantages of an education to other Americans, the Indians returned to their reservations to spark a demand for more educational advantages for their own children.

Of growing importance has been the effect produced by the building and improvement of reservation roads. This, plus modern modes of transportation and communication, has brought most Arizona Indians into contact with the dominant culture. While all tribes are making adjustments to this culture, there are great differences in the speed of acculturation and the degree with which each selects or rejects new ideas.

It is difficult for the average person to realize that we cannot speak of Indians as a single group. Arizona's Indian tribes may differ from each other even more than

Americans differ from the Chinese, or Russians. An Apache, for example, has the same difficulty understanding the behavior of a Pima, or a Hualapai, as does the average non-Indian.

Indians of today recognize, in theory at least, the value of education, modern medicine, and the American economic system. This recognition has not reached the stage, only in individual cases, where the desire for education will overcome all obstacles for its attainment. The medicine man is still a powerful force in some tribes. The American economic system--thrift, saving, private property concepts, capital investment--makes little if any sense to many Arizona Indians.

One of the most difficult things for teachers of Indian children in Arizona to realize is that Indians are a diverse people. When the name Indian is applied to all Arizona tribes, we lose sight of the fact that the term covers a greater number of races and cultural groups than most people know. When the word European, or Asiatic, is used, we immediately think of many different races. The use of the word Indian should be used in the same sense. Teachers should then have a basis for a clear comparison of the fourteen or fifteen linguistic and cultural groups that make up our Arizona tribes. The more teachers know about Indian children and their background, the better they are equipped to understand and be of help in their educational efforts.

Cultural Factors in Social Adjustment

We must remember Indian tribes are no longer culturally homogenous and for this reason behavior is not predictable on the basis of a knowledge of true aboriginal patterns. But whoever has observed the behavior of many Papago in possession of cash knows that, at least ninety times out of a hundred, the Papago will spend most of his money at once at the traders, at a fiesta, or in town. For him, money's essential value seems to lie in its conversion into pleasure and into the satisfaction of immediate needs. It usually provides prestige only in the form of a particularly beautiful saddle, or occasionally in a car, a radio, a television, or a sewing machine; seldom is it accumulated. Money for a Papago child, as for his elders, gives him the gratification of meeting his present needs. After urgent needs have been satisfied, money is used chiefly to obtain the sort of pleasure specific to old Papago culture, wholehearted and complete relaxation after the tension of work. Here the desires and the needs of an ancient culture are met with the tools of a recently introduced, alien socioeconomic and cultural system.

The Navajo tribe is the largest tribe in Arizona. Some of them do have a great drive to get rich, and one must ask how much of this is due to non-Indian influence, but the majority seem to be interested only in meeting immediate needs. This to many teachers makes them seem "utterly without ambition." Navajos will sometimes say, "All we want is enough to eat for ourselves and our families." What is not said but is often implied by context or in other ways is that life is so dangerous and terrible and so many things can happen to people, that anyone is foolish to ask for more than immediate security. Hence, for many of the tribe, the predominant drive is for moderate material well-being.

Thus, possessions for many Indians are valued both as providing security and as

affording opportunities for mild ostentation. But to take the attainment of riches as the chief aim of life is universally condemned. Following is a typical pronouncement by an old Navajo leader:

"The Navajo way is just to want enough to have enough to eat for your family and nice things to wear sometimes. We don't like it when nowadays some of these young men marry rich girls for their money and waste it all right away. The old people say this is wrong. You can't get rich if you look after your relatives right. You can't get rich without cheating some people. Cheating people is the wrong way. That way gets you into trouble. Men should be honest to get along."

Obligations toward one's own relatives become particularly difficult for a Navajo in business. In one of the Navajo enterprises, the Navajo foreman was "unable" to discharge any Navajo workman, no matter how inefficient. The reason is plain. Navajo communities kept the peace in the past by an unwritten law of good will, even toward the lazy and the quarrelsome. The foreman, neither an elder nor a relative to the workman, could not risk his standing in the community by an act of aggression. Even more difficult is the lot of the Navajo policeman who, on occasion, must arrest not only fellow Navajo but his own relatives. The suicide of one policeman is attributed to this cause.

As to hard work, one frequently hears the Arizona Indian accused of being lazy, shiftless, and incompetent. If one were to gather together the cartoons about Indians published by magazines and newspapers in the United States over a period of only one year, the majority of these would be found to surround this general non-Indian assumption that Indians are basically lazy and do nothing they can escape doing.

There is no denying that many Indians are lazy, but so are many people of any race. Many modern Indians have found life pointless and without purpose and, as a result, many of them doubtless have accepted the line of least resistance and make little or no effort. An Indian wants, as the non-Indian does, to know that what he is doing is of some use. He must feel that he is producing something of actual value in the life he is living. He may feel, like the farmer, that he is producing something of vital value. Or he may have the office workers' desired stimulus; an interesting job, with hopes of getting to the top. Or, like the business man or the politician, he may take satisfaction in planning and directing a project of his own. Indian or whitemen who have none of these stimuli are frequently loafers. The energy of the Indian as well as that of the non-Indian worker is likely to be in direct ratio to his interest in the job he is doing and his conviction of its worth to him or to others.

To many Arizona Indians work is not, as it is in Puritan tradition, a good thing in itself. Their values do not lead the individual to consider work in itself as a virtue or as a source of personal prestige. Wage work, in their eyes, is a means to an end; and the few things that an unacculturated Indian might buy seldom have sufficient attraction to move him to seek a higher income by way of year-round jobs which call for unbroken sequence of work days.

Indian conception of space and time are hopelessly confusing from the point of

view of members of the dominant society. To people familiar with the Indian country, they know an "Indian mile" may mean a mile, five hundred years, or five miles.

Anthropologists report that language is the essence of culture. There are no people anywhere known to be without a language and the language always includes expressions to describe those things that are considered important to the people speaking that language. In the Sioux, and many other Indian languages, there is no word for time.

Both "time" and "space" affect the behavior of everyone in Western culture. "Time," especially, causes us to be oriented toward calendars, dates, "the course of history," time tables, clocks, time wages, race against time, accounting, compound interest, actuarial statistics, annals, diaries, the age of rocks, of the earth, of the solar system of the universe. The book of Genesis gets the cosmos launched in 4004 B.C. Time impels us to look ahead in planning programs, schedules, appropriations, balanced budgets. Our love affair with time causes other cultures whose languages permit a less hurried outlook, as the American Indian, to regard us as somewhat mad.

People that work with Indians are often heard to complain, "Indians have no idea of the meaning of time." "Pretty soon" may be in ten minutes or ten hours. This is also true of many rural non-Indians--their lives are less hurried than the city dweller. Most people, however, are time conscious, from the time they are infants fed on schedule, until they come to their final resting place.

Modern day Indians are discovering the importance of "clock time" in getting along in life away from the reservations, and many who cannot read or write have learned to tell time. If a job is important to an Indian and he cannot depend on "sun time," he will often arrive an hour early. This has been found to be true of Indian children who really want to come to school.

An interesting and amusing article appeared recently in which the author made the point that many cultures worshipped certain gods publicly and other gods privately. In American culture, he pointed out, many of us avow Christianity and publicly worship Jehovah, whereas an even larger proportion of us actually worship the pagan god TIME. This he proceeded to prove, by pointing out that most of us wore the symbol of TIME in amulet form as a wristwatch, or a pocket piece. Each home of a TIME worshipper has an icon, with a clock as the godhead. TIME worshippers consult their oracle frequently throughout the day and sometimes throughout the night, especially when planning anything of importance. In all of this we treat the god TIME with the same ceremony that an aborigine observes in respecting or regarding whatever fetish or symbol is part of his cultural background. The article, of course, was a satire, and the author had his tongue in his cheek. However, he unconsciously pointed out a contrast between Indian and non-Indian culture which is an important consideration for educators.

We are a "time worshipping" civilization. This is so obvious to us that we never stop to think that it may not be equally as obvious to Indian children. We realize that TIME is not the most desirable of our deities, but anyone who is to succeed in the everyday industrial life has to recognize that he must rule his life by TIME. Anyone who fails to do so has trouble fitting successfully into our culture.

There are probably no others quite like us in this respect. We have taken the recurring four seasons of the year and divided the cycle into 365 days and each of these by a clock into 24 hours, each hourly unit into minutes, and each of these further into 60 seconds. And currently in our atomic age, we find that even the segmentation of this phenomenon we call time to the smallest degree is not yet small enough; in the language of the atomic scientists a period of time called a jiffy is useful in their calculations--a jiffy being the length of time it takes an object moving at the speed of light to travel a distance of one centimeter. When we think of light traveling at the rate of 186,300 miles per second and a centimeter as being a little less than 2/3 of an inch, we can get some slight hint of the refinements of time in our life today.

All this represents a cultural acceptance of a factor in life that is foreign to Indian thinking or Indian experience. The sun has been his alarm clock, the seasons furnished a calendar of sorts, which dictated when to plant and harvest crops, and when to hunt. The weather controlled the growth of his crops and the movement of the animals, not man-made time. Scanning the research that has been done on the subject reveals that there were no North American indigenous cultures where people did the same thing from morning to night, day after day, year after year. If a job that their existence depended upon had to be done, it was done intensively for many hours, or many consecutive days. When it was finished the workers might rest, or dance, or play, or celebrate in one way or another, in the period before the next important job had to be done.

But the moment an Indian comes in contact for any period of time with non-Indians all this changes. The small Indian child entering school is expected to be there at a certain hour in the morning, his school day is regulated by a bell geared to a clock, he returns home at a set time each afternoon. He is judged not "socially acceptable" and is a poor school citizen if he is tardy or absent often without an acceptable excuse.

One of the easiest things in the world is to condemn people for being different from what is currently "socially acceptable" without understanding or if possible appreciating the reason for the differences. Do teachers stop to think or try to find out by first-hand observation why their children are not time conscious? There is a story that tells of a teacher of Indian children who passed away after a nervous breakdown. On her tombstone was inscribed:

"HERE RESTS MRS. JONES. SHE TRIED TO HURRY THE NAVAJO."

There is a lesson to be learned from this story that should be of value to educators of Indian children. They should understand why the child is the way he is before starting to pour him into the mold that has been set up as desirable, for a good school citizen, in non-Indian society.

A big difficulty in running a school where many Indian children are enrolled is the fact that many of the families do not have clocks to enable them to coordinate the rising and feeding of the children with the arrival of the school bus which is to take them to school. It would then become clear that one of the first things which must happen to Indian children who are expected to adjust to school life, is to become oriented to the importance of our clockwork civilization. Emphasis must be placed on the importance

of time in non-Indian culture, and this brought to the children in actual lifelike classroom activities. Early in his school career the child should be taught to tell time. In a classroom of Apache first graders the teacher was talking to a guest when from the back of the room exploded the word, "Recess." This child had found a definite need for knowing how to tell time. Recess was a very important time of day for him.

Making the child time conscious is easier than doing the same thing for his parents. It would be interesting to see what could be accomplished by a dozen inexpensive clocks, in Indian homes, to promote in the families the regularity which educators consider important.

School administrators have a difficult time getting the correct age of Indian students. Navajos, especially, remember seasons of the year and sequence of events rather accurately. It is on absolute dates that they become confused. A Navajo mother always knows the order of the birth of her children. She can tell you whether a child was born when there was snow on the ground or when the feed for the sheep was green. But she may insist that her oldest child is fourteen years old and a younger one sixteen. Children being born on reservations today have their births recorded at agency headquarters. Teachers wishing to verify a birth date may do this by writing or calling the seat of tribal government of the tribe to which the child belongs.

The time spent in seeking to understand those with whom one must work is usually well invested. It will help to avoid misunderstanding if one respects the life patterns of others, which are as integral a part of their cultural patterns as one's own habits are of one's own social group. Incidentally, many disciplinary difficulties in the class will disappear, for apparent disobedience will appear frequently as a different "manner" of reacting to a common situation. Apparent discourtesies often will turn into demonstrations of respect--in the "manner of another culture." Indian children will be found to be even more desirous of "getting on" with teachers than a similar number of white children.

Indian children do not differ from non-Indian youngsters in any of the fundamentals of behavior. However, they have grown up from infancy in different "manners."
Their taboos are likely to be different, and the standards of conduct will at first conform to those of their fathers and mothers. Teachers should be aware of this from the first day of the school year.

"My grandchild, the whites have many things which we Navajos need, but we cannot get them. It is as though the whites were in a grassy canyon and there they have wagons, plows, and plenty of food. We Navajos are up on the dry mesa. We can hear them talking but we cannot get to them. My grandchild, education is the ladder. Tell our people to take it."

Manuelito
Famous Navajo War Chief

Summary: Closing the Educational Gap

1. The schools which Indian students attend--Federal, public, and mission--should offer the best curricula, programs, teaching methods, and guidance employed in educating all students. The quality of the instruction they receive and its adaption to their needs is of prime importance.
2. The training offered should be built on the strength of Indian students rather than on their weakness.
3. The Indian community, tribal, local, and government officials, should be included in all educational planning.
4. The teaching staff of all schools teaching Indian students should be qualified in their field of specialization, but should also know the cultural background of their students.
5. The standards should not be lowered in any school to accommodate Indian students, but should be geared to their needs. Special remedial measures should be taken to close the educational gap, not lowered standards.
6. The Indian child should be allowed to live at home whenever possible. His individual age, his emotional adjustment, and the circumstances of his home life should be considered before he is taken away from his parents to be educated.
7. The people who work with Indian students, not just teachers, should have special training and be adequately compensated for their efforts. This includes bus drivers, dormitory attendants, and teacher-aides.
8. The counseling of Indian students should continue from elementary school through college.
9. The education of adults should be strengthened. The Indian tribes should take action to require parents to keep their children in school.
10. The tribes and government should provide adequate grants for higher education. This should include vocational training as well as college grants.
11. The provision for economic improvement must go hand-in-hand with education.
12. The Indian himself must be aware of his social, economic, and educational problems. The effectiveness of any program depends on the involvement of the Indian people in the solution of their own problems.

INDIAN AND SPANISH SURNAME POPULATION IN ARIZONA BY COUNTIES
IN APRIL 1960

County	Total Population	Indian Pop.	Per Cent of Indians in Total Pop.	No. of Persons of Spanish Surname	Per Cent of Pop. with Spanish Surname	Combined Indian and Spanish Surname Pop.	Per Cent of Total Pop.
Apache	30,438	22,814	75.0	1,033	3.4	23,847	78.4
Cochise	55,039	108	0.2	13,764	25.0	13,872	25.2
Coconino	41,857	11,668	27.9	4,341	10.4	16,009	38.3
Gila	25,745	3,513	13.6	5,633	21.9	9,146	35.5
Graham	14,045	1,249	8.9	2,355	16.8	3,604	25.7
Greenlee	11,509	182	1.6	5,238	45.5	5,420	47.1
Maricopa	663,510	8,136	1.2	78,996	11.9	87,132	13.1
Mohave	7,736	727	9.4	630	8.1	1,357	17.5
Navajo	37,994	19,324	50.9	2,604	6.9	21,928	57.8
Pima	265,660	7,307	2.8	44,481	16.7	51,788	19.5
Pinal	62,673	5,760	9.2	17,343	27.7	23,103	36.9
Santa Cruz	10,808	17	0.2	6,222	57.6	6,239	57.8
Yavapai	28,912	780	2.7	2,403	8.3	3,183	11.0
Yuma	46,235	1,802	3.9	9,313	20.1	11,115	24.0
TOTALS	1,302,161	83,387	6.4	194,356	14.9	277,743	21.3

Source: United States Census of Population, 1960
U. S. Department of Commerce
Bureau of Census